Aircraft taken on lease from ZAS Airlines by IA

923. SHRI MOHAMMED AFZAL alias MEEM AFZAL : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether Indian Airlines had in the past taken aircrafts on lease from ZAS Airlines; and

(b) if so, what are the details and present position thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD) : (a) and (b) M/s. ZAS Airlines operated services with their aircraft and crew for Indian Airlines on Male-Trivan-drum sector during the period 13-12-1992 to 11-2-1993 when services of Indian Airlines were disrupted owing to agitation by its pilots. These services' were operated under a commercial arrangement between Indian Airlines and M/s. ZAS Airlines.

Amount Spent on Advertisements on Tourism Vayudoot, AI and IA

924. SHRI MOHAMMED AFZAL alias MEEM AFZAL : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state what is the amount spent by his Ministry on advertisements in newspapers on tourism, Vayudoot, Air India and Indian Airlines during the period from 1st April, 1992 to 31st March, 1993.

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD) : The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Suggestion by the Government of Tripura for Promoting Tourism

925. SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government of Tripura has urged the Central Government recently to take steps to open a transit route through Bangladesh with a view to promoting tourism ;

(b) if so, what is the reaction of Government thereto;

(c) what steps are proposed to be taken by Government to go ahead with the suggestion of the State Government; arid

(d) what is the expenditure likely to be incurred by Government in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) Does not arise.

Smuggling of Goods by Officials of Indian Air Carriers

926. SHRI S. AUSTIN : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) the names of the Indian Air Carriers that have international flights ;

(b) whether some officials of there air carriers have been found guilty of bring ing in smuggled goods on the return flights during 1992 and so far in 1993 ;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the action taken against each one of them?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) Both national darners i.e. Air India and Indian Airlines are operating international passenger flights from/to India.

(b) to (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Merger of Indian Airlines and Vayudoot

927. SHRI SURESH KALMADT : SHRI GOVINBRAO ADIK :

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOUMSM be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news item published in the 'Observer' of 22nd November, 1993 under the caption "Indian Airlines Vayudoot merger in trouble"; and

(b) if so, what is Government's reaction thereto ?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) it has been decided by the Government that Yayudoot should be merged with Indian Airlines instead of retaining the form of joint ownership by Indian Airlines and Air India. Pending completion of the legal formalities required for merger, Vayudoot continues to be a company. A committee has been constituted by the Board of Directors of Vayudoot to look into the. demands of the. employees and submit suitable recommendations. The hunger strike has since been called off.

Recruitment in Tourism Sector

928. SHRI SHANTI TYAGI : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURM be pleased to state:

(a) the approximate number of people employed in the tourism sector at present:

(b) whether Government have planned to provide direct and indirect employmenl to about 30 million people by the end of the century;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether there are persistent demands from the Eastern and North-eastern States to open up more areas for tourism; and

(e) if so, the reaction of, Government in this[1] regard.

THE MINISTER. OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD) : (a) to (c) Tourism Sector is at present employing, direct and indirectly, between 13 to 14 million persons. National Action Plan for Tourism presented to parliament on 5th May 1992 envisages that this figure would be doubled by end of the century.

(d) and (e) It is primarily the responsibility of the State Governments to open up new areas for tourism. However proposals from the concerned State Governments for the relaxation of Restricted Area- Permits (RAP) and Protected Area Permits (PAP) are being considered by the Home Ministry from time to time and appropriate decisions taken.

Constriction of New Air Traffic Control Tower

929. SHRI S. MADHAVAN : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state;

(a) whether a project report was prepared for constructing a new Air Traffic Control Tower-cum Technical block, , at Madras;

(b) if so, what are the details of this project ; and

(c) the steps taken to implement this project ?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD) : (a) to (c) The National Airports Authority has a plan to construct a new Air Traffic Control Tower-cum-Tech-nicaj block at Madras. The land for this has been taken oyer by the National Airports Authority. The conceptual plans are under preparation.

वैष्णों देवी मंदिर जाने वाले तीर्थ यात्री

939. श्री शंकर दयाल सिंह : क्या नागर विमानन और पर्यटन मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) जनवरी से नवम्बर, 1993 के दौरान कितने तीर्थयात्रियों ने वैष्णों देवी मन्दिर की यात्रा की ;

(ख) समाचार पत्रों में छपी, इस आशय की रिपोर्टों में किस सीमा तक सामुचित सुविधाओं की अनुपलब्धता के कारण तीर्थयात्रियों की संख्या में कमी हुई है, पर सरकार की क्या प्रतिक्रिया है; और

(ग) क्या वैष्णों देवी मन्दिर जाने वाले तीर्थयात्रियों से किसी प्रकार का शुल्क वसूल